



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

Good morning.

This Sunday, January 13, more than 30,000 runners will gather at the starting line in Phoenix for the Fifth Annual P.F. Chang's Rock n' Roll Arizona Marathon & ½ Marathon. Runners will follow the exciting course, which features many great bands for encouragement and entertainment, through Phoenix, Scottsdale and Tempe. This dynamic event brings thousands of visitors to Arizona. AOT is thrilled to join the Greater Phoenix, Scottsdale and Tempe Convention and Visitors Bureaus in sponsoring this great event.

Last year the marathon generated an estimated \$44 million for the state's economy and also contributed more than \$2 million in tax revenues. This level of spending by the race participants produced an employment impact of 1,230 jobs all within Maricopa County.

For the 2007 event, more than half of the runners were from out-of-state, which meant that a significant number of race participants were spending money on hotels, food, shopping and other items in Phoenix, Phoenix, Scottsdale and Tempe, the race co-hosts.

With more than half of the runners coming from out of state, we are certain that these visitors will take advantage of their free time to discover the Grand Canyon State's amazing travel destinations.

I want to wish the best of luck to all the runners on Sunday!

Have a great week.



Margie A. Emmermann
Director
Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

AOT Presents the Next ATU Workshop, “Successful Strategies for Destination Marketing”

The Arizona Office of Tourism is proud to present the next Arizona Tourism University workshop series, “Successful Strategies for Destination Marketing.” These sessions will focus on how to build effective marketing and communication plans. Results-driven communications are critical in today’s world for selling ideas, creating marketing campaigns, or competing for funds and resources. This presentation will provide insight into future trends for marketing and communications, and offer examples of ways to increase the attention your marketing and communication plans get. Times and locations are listed below. To register for a workshop please contact Sarah Martins at 602-364-3687 or via e-mail at smartins@azot.gov.

January 16, 2008

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Little America Hotel
2515 East Butler Avenue
Flagstaff, Arizona 86004

January 23, 2008

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
JW Marriott Starr Pass Resort & Spa
3800 West Starr Pass Boulevard
Tucson, Arizona 85745

Trippin’ with AOT

AOT to Conduct Sales Mission in Mexico

Mexico is one of Arizona’s most important international markets. To further increase awareness of the Grand Canyon State, AOT will coordinate a sales mission to Mexico in February 2008, and we invite our partners to participate. Each year, the Arizona Office of Tourism coordinates a sales mission to reach out to the second tier cities in Mexico – cities that aren’t typically reached through the agency’s other promotions. This year AOT will target three cities in Northern Mexico including Chihuahua, Monterrey and Culiacan during a five-day sales mission scheduled for the week of February 25 – 29, 2008. AOT will host breakfast seminars in each city and invite local travel agents and tour operators to attend. For additional information and to obtain a participation form, please contact Loretta Belonio at 602-364-3725 or via e-mail at lbeldonio@azot.gov.

Industry News

ADOC Announces Tax Credits for Motion Picture Production

The Arizona Department of Commerce (ADOC) has announced that beginning February 1, 2008, ADOC will begin accepting applications for allocations of tax credits from the 2008 five percent set aside program for commercial advertisements and music videos. The primary goal of the Motion Picture Production Tax Incentives Program is to promote and stimulate the production of commercial motion pictures in Arizona. The program achieves this goal by providing incentives to qualified companies that produce motion pictures in Arizona and to persons who construct infrastructure projects in Arizona. Please visit www.azcommerce.com/Film/Incentives for an overview of the tax credit process and for details about the five percent set aside program. The application and guidelines will be posted on February 1, 2008.

Passport Requirement Confusion Continues

A new year is ringing in a new round of confusion about when and where Americans will need to carry a U.S. passport. Late last month, President Bush signed legislation that postpones until 2009 a requirement to show a passport when returning to the U.S. by land or sea from Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean. Air travelers returning from those regions have needed a passport since Jan. 23, 2007. Despite the one-year delay in requiring passports when entering the U.S. by land or sea, the Department of Homeland Security still plans to tighten border crossings starting this month. As of Jan. 31, adult travelers re-entering the U.S. by land, ferry or small boat must present a passport or a government-issued photo ID plus proof of citizenship such as a birth certificate or naturalization certificate. Those 18 and younger need only proof of citizenship. Cruise passengers are officially exempt though cruise lines encourage passport use and already require photo ID and proof of citizenship. (*Page 1D, USA Today*)

New Passport Technology to be Available

The federal government will soon offer passport cards equipped with electronic data chips to U.S. citizens who travel frequently between the United States and Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean. The cards can be read wirelessly from 20 feet, offering convenience to travelers but raising security and privacy concerns about the possibility of data being intercepted. The goal of the passport card, an alternative to the traditional passport, is to reduce the wait at land and sea border checkpoints. An electronic device can simultaneously read multiple cards; radio frequency identification signals from a distance, checking travelers against terrorist and criminal watch lists while they wait. The \$45 card will be optional and cannot be used for air travel. (*Pages B8, Wall Street Journal; A6, Washington Post, 1/1*)

Study: Hispanic Consumers More Receptive to E-mail Marketing

Hispanics welcome email communication from companies they know up to 11 times a month, while non-Hispanic consumers tolerate such emails only up to 7.4 times a month, according to new research from Mintel Comperemedia. "This population is certainly more receptive to marketing and offers," says Carmen Curran, senior email analyst at Chicago-based Mintel Comperemedia. Hispanics tend to spend more time online while at home than the general population (9.2 hours per week versus 8.5 hours), so receiving information and offers through email makes sense to them, she says. The company has conducted the research regarding email receptivity for two quarters. While the number of Hispanics who are receptive to email marketing increased overall, the number of non-Hispanics who are receptive to email marketing decreased from quarter to quarter, she says. When a relationship with a company was established, 26 percent of non-Hispanics said they would never want to receive "new offer notifications" compared to only 17 percent of Hispanics, she says. The same holds true for "special rewards/incentive opportunities" 23 percent versus 13 percent; "newsletters" 25 percent versus 13

percent, and "coupons/discounts/special promotions" 21 percent versus 13 percent. Marketers are beginning to pay heed, with more offering Spanish-language options on their Web sites and in other communications. But most of these are verbatim translations of the English versions. Forward-thinking marketers may want to consider new communications targeted specifically to Hispanics, she says. In addition, the Hispanic population is young, with a median age of 27.2 years compared to the overall population at 36.2 years. Younger consumers gravitate toward Internet-based services and communications like email.

Merger Creates Fifth Largest Travel Site

The merger of the two biggest brands in travel search could mean more comprehensive rates and availability data, a larger portfolio of products and services and an overall improved customer experience, according to Kayak.com and SideStep.com. Kayak, the world's largest travel search engine, said it will use \$196 million in new financing to complete the merger. The move will create the fifth largest travel site. Kayak.com's merger with SideStep.com reshapes the largest sector in online commerce," said Michael Moritz, a partner at Sequoia Capital, who is joining Kayak's board of directors. As the fifth largest travel brand, says TravelMole, the site will have more monthly visitors than Priceline and every airline except Southwest. The site will also beat out every hotel and rental car brand. Consumers will conduct more than 33 million searches on Kayak.com and its affiliates in January 2008, up from 16 million in January 2007, according to the company.